

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 ICA-11 COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04 SIL-01 IO-13
/107 W

-----129555 021332Z /75

R 020930Z MAY 78
FM AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7619
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY MASERU
AMEMBASSY MBABANE
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE JOHANNESBURG 1117

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PLAB, ICFTU, SF
SUBJECT: ICFTU DELEGATION TO SOUTH AFRICA

REF: JOHANNESBURG 0917 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY
INTO LABOR LEGISLATION AND ADVISOR TO THE MINISTER OF
LABOR, NIC WIEHAHN, HAS CLAIMED THE RECENT VISIT BY
TWO ICFTU EXECUTIVES AS ANOTHER SUCCESS IN HIS
CAMPAIGN TO REDUCE SOUTH AFRICA'S ISOLATION FROM
THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR MOVEMENT. END SUMMARY.

2. A TWO-MAN DELEGATION FROM THE INTERNATIONAL CON-
FEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS, ANDREW KAILEMBO,
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CHIEF OF THE AFRICA DIVISION, AND STEEN SILLEMAN,
CHIEF OF THE EDUCATION DIVISION, ARRIVED IN SOUTH
AFRICA FOR A BRIEF, LOW-KEY VISIT ON APRIL 18. THEY
WERE MET A JAN SMUTS AIRPORT IN JOHANNESBURG BY SKAKES
SIKHIKHANE OF THE URBAN TRAINING PROJECT, TAFFY ADLER
OF THE INDUSTRIAL AID SOCIETY AND BRIAN FREDERICKS
OF THE NATIONAL UNION OF MOTOR ASSEMBLY AND ALLIED

WORKERS.

3. ACCORDING TO RIAAN DEVILLIERS, LABOR REPORTER FOR THE RAND DAILY MAIL, WHEN KAILEMBO WAS CONTACTED BY TELEPHONE IN SWAZILAND ON APRIL 25, HE "DENIED THE PARTY HAD BEEN TO SOUTH AFRICA AND ECLINED TO GIVE ANY INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TOUR".

4. SIG HANNIG OF THE STAR REPORTS THAT THE VISIT TOOK PLACE WITH THE FULL KNOWLEDGE OF NIC WIEHAHN, CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO LABOR LEGISLATION. HE QUOTES WIEHAHN AS SAYING, "WE HAVE NOTHING TO HIDE ON THE LABOR FRONT,...OUR PRESENT LAWS AND PRACTICES MAY NOT BE BEYOND REPROACH, BUT THEY ARE UNDER INVESTIGATION. OUR MOST POWERFUL WEAPON AGAINST HOSTILITY AND BOYCOTTS IS COMPLETE FRANKNESS AND SINCERITY". REFERRING TO HIS OWN RECENT THREE WEEK TOUR OF EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES, WIEHAHN SAID, "MY VISIT WAS SUCCESSFUL TO THE EXTENT THAT I WAS SUCCESSFUL IN STAVING OFF PLANNED ECONOMIC ACTION AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA. BUT THIS DOES NOT ABSOLVE US FROM THE RESPONSIBILITY OF KEEPING UP WITH THE DEMANDS OF OUR TIMES TO ACHIEVE A FULLY DEMOCRATIC LABOR SYSTEM".

5. COMMENT: WHILE AT JAN SMUTS TO MEET ANOTHER VISITOR, THE REGIONAL LABOR OFFICER MET KAILEMBO AND SILLEMAN.
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THEY EXPLAINED THAT THE PURPOSE OF THEIR VISIT WAS TO STUDY THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ASSISTANCE WHICH IS CURRENTLY BEING PROVIDED BY THE ICFTU TO UTP, IAS AND THE NUMAAW. THE FACT THAT KAILEMBO AND SILLEMAN WERE ABLE TO OBTAIN VISAS ATTESTS TO WIEHAHN'S AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT'S DESIRE TO BREAK THROUGH THE INCREASING ISOLATION WHICH THEY FEEL IN INTERNATIONAL LABOR CIRCLES.
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